



COLORADO

Department of Transportation

Office of Policy and Government Relations

DATE: April 30, 2015
TO: Transportation Commissioners, Executive Director, Executive Management Team, Branch Managers, and Office Directors
FROM: Andy Karsian, Office of Policy & Government Relations
RE: Weekly Legislative Report – 2015 Session of the Colorado General Assembly

Overview

If you have ever pulled an all-nighter, then crammed for a final exam, then had to convince an unfriendly colleague to change their mind on an important issue, all while having fifteen other people distract you with their problems – then you have a sense of what the end of the legislative session is like.

This week was extremely busy. It began with furious lobbying from both sides of the transportation bonding bill, SB 272. Late Tuesday evening it passed, not without a bit of drama, on second readings in the Senate; however, the following day, the bill was killed on its final reading. However, that wasn't the end. The Senate was able to resurrect the bill, pass it, and it is now headed to the House (See below). On another bill, the House Finance committee heard SB 90, CDOT's Temporary License Plate bill. This bill passed easily though five different committees and legislators in the Finance committee, while expressing some concerns about the new fee revenues, passed it on to the Appropriations. Safe Routes to School continues its process and is in the Senate State Affairs committee, while HB 1109, the continuation of SB 228 funds in outlying fiscal years, also passed out of the House Finance committee, only to be killed in House Appropriations this morning.

The House introduced the Governor's Hospital Provider Fee bill – HB 1389, and the Senate introduced a bill to repeal CDOT's MOST program – SB 286. A bipartisan group of legislators introduced SB 275- that would allow legislators to not only receive confidential health information from citizens, but also make them a first stop for whistleblowers removing existing protections currently in place.

All of this with three days to go. Stay tuned for the final wrap up report that will detail how the drama unfolded in the final hours under the dome.

Legislation

Senate Bill 15-272 (Transportation Bonds). This bill, sponsored by Sen. Baumgardner and Rep. DelGrosso, submits to the voters a proposal to use half of CDOT's federal gas tax revenues to secure \$3.5B in transportation bonds. The bonds would cover around 30 projects from CDOT's 228 list, and some other projects added by stakeholders. CDOT in essence would be pledging existing revenues used for asset management projects to pay for new infrastructure without any new funding dedicated to the bonds. CDOT appreciates the attention that this bill has provided transportation this session, but while it is the right problem, it is the wrong solution because it attempts to solve a funding issue through financing.

If you have any questions on these or any other legislative issues please contact Andy Karsian at 303-757-9073. Weekly memos and our bill tracking chart are available online at: <http://www.coloradodot.info/about/governmentrelations/state-government-liaison>.

